

RED HOOK TOWN BOARD MEETING

February 8, 2011

A meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Red Hook, Dutchess County, New York was convened in public session at the Town Hall, 7340 South Broadway, Red Hook at 7:30 p.m.

Present: Supervisor Sue Crane
Councilman James Ross
Councilwoman Micki Strawinski
Councilman Harry Colgan
Councilman William O'Neill
Deputy Town Clerk Claire Horst

Also present: Attorney for the Town Christine Chale
Village of Tivoli Deputy Mayor Susan Ezrati
Village of Red Hook Mayor David Cohen
Village of Red Hook Trustee Ed Blundell
Town Highway Superintendent Theresa Burke

Supervisor Crane welcomed everyone to the meeting and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. She introduced the members of the Town Board, Village of Red Hook and Village of Tivoli Boards.

ROUND TABLE: DISCUSSION OF INTENT TO DEVELOP A PLAN FOR SHARED SERVICES AMONG TOWN OF RED HOOK, VILLAGE OF RED HOOK AND VILLAGE OF TIVOLI MUNICIPALITIES FOR HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT AND DEPARTMENTS OF PUBLIC WORKS

Supervisor Crane explained that Red Hook has been talking for some time about the need for a highway garage and they've been discussing ways to get that done. Recently they've talked with Village officials about exploring shared services for highway purposes. We are at the point now where they feel the Town can support a highway garage. She introduced those who were part of the round table discussion then asked them to give background about why they think this is an important collaboration.

Village Trustee Ed Blundell said the issue was discussed at their meeting last night. He asked Mayor Dave Cohen to tell what he knew about the garage.

Mayor Cohen gave the history of the current highway garage. The building has been here since the mid-40's, was shipped here from Fort Edward and used for farm equipment. When that wasn't needed any more the Town used it for their garage.

Red Hook Village Trustee Ed Blundell did a walk through with Highway Superintendent Theresa Burke recently. During the short time Bucky Coon was Highway Superintendent he moved the offices to a trailer outside of the garage. The Village of Red Hook also has a Highway Department and their highway garage is a pole barn which will have to be changed one day. Regarding the shared services they found that the State of New York is offering Local Government Efficiency Grants. The Village of Red Hook wants to go along with a model plan and see if they can get the Local Government Efficiency Grant. The Village passed a resolution at their last meeting saying they want to explore their options of shared or consolidated highway services. As a first step they would work with the Town of Red Hook and the Village of Tivoli and apply for the Local Government Efficiency Grant to determine need. He explained what they'd like to see the grant cover so the cost doesn't fall on the taxpayer. The Village of Red Hook sees this as a win/win situation. There is an existing Shared Services Committee that has been meeting quite frequently and they have a lot of data.

Councilman O'Neill is in favor of anything that focuses on the efficiency of the three municipalities and is less costly. He looks forward to something productive coming from the shared services.

Deputy Mayor Susan Ezrati said that Tivoli is a distance away which creates some concerns. They only have 4 ½ miles of road so their actual highway budget is minimal. They are approaching this as their residents will be paying part of the cost of this garage. Tivoli will be studying this issue.

Councilman Colgan has thought about this for a long time. He has been going to meetings about this for years. We have a difficult time coming up with numbers so the idea of having a shared grant is a very positive financial agenda. The State is pushing savings in Towns. He feels confident that if the three municipalities apply for the grant that could help us with technical expertise to putting numbers on what we could accomplish. Living in the Village of Tivoli, he'd

have to pay for the highway garage in the Village and the Town. That is an issue that has to be explained and justified. It is important that they all work together and get a grant and be open to change.

Councilman Ross has been in favor of a new highway garage for many years and if shared services can possibly save both the residents of the Village and the Town money and streamline the effort he is very much in favor of it.

Councilwoman Strawinski has been to workshops regarding shared services. She is looking forward to hearing what the intermunicipal group has to say and would like to see a grant pay for the fiscal study.

Highway Superintendent Theresa Burke explained that the Highway Department acts as distribution center for the Villages, the school, and the fire department. They are already sharing some services and she explained how those work. There are different situations that arise where they all help each other. Her focus is the highway garage. The residents need to look at their roads and their highway crew as assets to the Town. Right now those assets are not being protected as well as they should be. She is happy to give anyone a tour if there is any doubt about the need for a new highway garage. She could explain what they should have in terms of safety, efficiency and less maintenance. There is a need, and she understands that economic times are difficult but there are advantages to that as well as far as cost savings with bidding out and lower interest rates.

Supervisor Crane explained that we've been successful in sharing services among us in other areas. She cited the Assessor and the Building Department as far as those services. She explained the process that Saugerties went through regarding consolidation of their police departments. They received grants for the study by a consultant and for the implementation. We are meeting every other week talking about space needs for our highway garage and hopefully meeting the needs of the Villages and the Town. Regarding the funding, the highway garage is a Town wide asset which benefits the entire Town. We provide road services throughout the Town used by each of the municipalities. Having two incorporated Villages within the Town makes things a little more complex in terms of the budgeting process. That is why that asset is billed to all residents irrespective to where they live. Everybody uses the roads. She asked the panel about any concerns before she read the resolution.

Red Hook Village Trustee Ed Blundell explained that the Village by its nature has unique needs. They provide leaf, brush and garbage pickup. Regarding the modeling he referred to earlier, he wants to make sure that is built into that model. They would not want to forgo anything. In regard to shared services CHIPS money will be saved regarding buying or contracting for equipment or manpower. He'd like to try to develop that concept further. He told the Board that the Village passed a resolution last night.

Supervisor Crane read the resolution regarding a new highway garage and shared services with the Villages of Red Hook and Tivoli to apply for a Local Government Efficiency Grant which will provide funding for consultant services to study municipal budgets, capital assets and long range transportation needs and make recommendations to the municipalities. Thereafter the Town will work in concert with the Villages to analyze the results and jointly come together to take steps that will improve efficiencies and cost-effective measures for the sake of all three municipalities.

RESOLUTION 2011 #13

RE: SHARED SERVICES WITH VILLAGES OF RED HOOK AND TIVOLI

On a motion of Supervisor Sue Crane seconded by Councilman Harry Colgan moved to accept the resolution as read.

Adopted	Ayes	5	Crane, Ross, Strawinski, Colgan, O'Neill
	Nays	0	

Copy Attached

The round table discussion ended at 7:55 p.m. and the Board took a short break. The Town Board meeting resumed at 8:05 p.m.

SUPERVISOR'S REPORT – will be presented at the next meeting

TOWN CLERK'S REPORT – will be presented at the next meeting

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Supervisor Crane announced that the Public Hearings regarding the proposed Zoning Amendments have been held and the report for the February 3rd meeting is being compiled by the Court Reporter. The Public Hearing is closed and written comments will be accepted until 4:00 p.m. on February 18th, 2011. Copies of the law and transcripts of the two public hearings will be available for review at the Town Clerk's Office, the Town's website, and both libraries. In regard to those two public hearings she asked to schedule two workshop meetings with the Board and the Planner regarding those public hearings. The first would be Thursday, March 10, the second on Wednesday, March 16 at 7:30 p.m. The public is welcome to attend.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Rosemarie Zengen, Save-Our-Town Committee spokesperson, presented a protest petition concerning the Traditional Neighborhood District. It was signed by the owners of more than 20% of the properties that would be affected by the proposed zoning law regarding the TND. She cited the law requiring that a supermajority of four members would be necessary to adopt the proposed zoning law. She asked if the public would be able to comment at the evening's scheduled workshops.

Supervisor Crane explained that the Board has to focus intensely on the zoning issue. She said depending on how much work has to be done, she might open for comments.

There were no more public comments.

PROPOSED WEST KERLEY CORNERS ROAD PDR PROJECT PRESENTATION- SCENIC HUDSON AND DUTCHESS LAND CONSERVANCY

Supervisor Crane introduced Dutchess Land Conservancy President Rebecca Thornton, and Vice President Art Collings, and Carrie Watkins-Bates from Scenic Hudson. They were there to discuss the possible assemblage of numbers of properties on West Kelley Corners Road who expressed interest in the application of purchase of development rights. They identified a funding stream that has potential through a federal program.

Carrie Watkins-Bates began the presentation of the "Core Farmland Protection Area".

Art Collings explained the easements held by Dutchess Land Conservancy almost 450 acres of those are in the Town of Red Hook. He showed a view of the W. Kerley Corners Road project. Carrie Watkins-Bates explained that they are non-profit land trusts concerned with farmland preservation.

Art Collings told the Board that in 2008 14 landowners on W. Kerley Corners Road petitioned the Town to buy the development rights of the entire assemblage of property. Since that time they have been working with landowners to develop a feasible plan for protecting that many properties on such a complicated project. They met with all of the landowners to determine what the development right costs would be on the project. There are 8 landowners with 600 acres total land who signed letters of intention. Those landowners are the Jones family's Panorama Farm, the Trezza property, the Sturges property, Northwind Farm (Biezynski's property), Karpinski property, Harrison/Jones property, Ken Migliorelli's property and the Streichler's Three Pond Farm. The Three Pond Farm is likely to move forward in two stages. One is on the agricultural portion of the property and they also have interest in working with the federal government's wetlands preserve project. That would require no match from local government. He explained the reasons the farmland along W. Kerley Corners Road is important. The prime soil will significantly contribute to preserving the water quality of the Stony Creek which is the water supply for Tivoli Bays and the Village of Tivoli. He also explained that the Trezza and Jones properties abut the National Register of Historic Places which would require levels of environmental consideration.

Carrie Watkins-Bates said the project presents a unique opportunity. She explained funding sources for purchase of development rights. There are normally a number of funds to draw from but the County and State funding is not available at this point. They've explored many other possibilities. The federal government has a funding source available. The application due date is coming up in March. It requires the land trust show they have the required match already available. Scenic Hudson voted for funding 25% and they would ask Red Hook for the other 25%. The total project cost is estimated to be \$3.07 million. She reviewed a handout spread sheet and explained that the costs may vary; 25% of the acquisition cost is what they'd ask for. That commitment they would ask from the Town would be just over \$700,000 for the acquisition plus about \$77,000 for the total project costs. One final note is that their applications to the federal program are due March 21, 2011 and they will continue to look for funding in other ways. Their experience with federal programs is much better than with the State funded programs. A mid-summer goal is aggressive but it is a goal they are going to strive for.

Supervisor Crane asked about legal fees if the federal program deals directly with the land trust. Carrie Watkins-Bates explained that in terms of the grant agreement, they work directly with the land trust. She explained how the process would work.

Supervisor Crane wonders about the additional cost borne by partner. She explained past experience with parcel negotiations. She asked if the federal government working directly with Scenic Hudson would eliminate some of the participation on the part of our legal involvement. Carrie Watkins-Bates thinks that is a question for the Town. With some conservation easements they'd think the Towns would want a similar role as a third party enforcer. She would expect that Town would still be involved to some extent.

Attorney Chale thinks the issue is that the Town would not be recipient of fund handling unless they have an interest in the property. This case is not proposing a co-holder but is a third party beneficiary but you still have involvement in the easement.

Carrie Watkins-Bates said the numbers are estimates.

Councilwoman Strawinski asked if the proposed Town cost includes legal fees.

Carrie Watkins-Bates told her yes, it does include legal fees.

Attorney Chale said procedurally the Farmland Protection Committee meets and reviews the applications and resource issues. After they complete the process the Town would review the applications, then hold a public hearing at which point they can consider whether you are in the position to make a conditional commitment. We did get the Draft Environmental Assessment Form from Art Collings. The Environmental Assessment Form will be reviewed. In terms of other steps, Scenic Hudson provided copies of appraisals which she suggested the Town Board members look at in greater detail. A resolution has been prepared establishing a public hearing date for the March meeting. She handed out appraisals for the Board to look at.

Councilman Colgan said the CPF is at the cusp of being resolved and could be a source of funds. Supervisor Crane explained that plan has to be presented to and accepted by the Town Board in order to access those funds.

Susan Ezrati thinks this is high priority.

Attorney Chale suggested writing a resolution allowing a commitment of funds.

Pete Hubbell said before the CPF money is committed they should be sure they meet the requirements.

Al Trezza asked what if the commitment from the Town and Scenic Hudson is made and there ends up being no USDA federal funding. That means this isn't going through?

Carrie Watkins-Bates said the federal program has been identified. They would like to keep the door open to allow Scenic Hudson to find alternatives.

Supervisor Crane said the PDR program limits the Town funding to 50%. We either have a partner or our commitment is on hold or no longer valid. This is very complicated. She told the speakers that she has our utmost respect for all they've done.

Peter Hubbell asked if the appraisals would be up for public review and when they might be available.

Supervisor Crane told him they can be posted within days. She asked for any comments from the Board.

Rosemarie Zengen asked if the owners of the farmland have all been approached and when they were approached.

Carrie Watkins-Bates said the 14 landowners signed a petition in 2008. Many of those also made applications to the Town. The land conservancies came out from that to help coordinate it. The Bulkely family donated their conservation easements and so did the Dee family.

Supervisor Crane read the resolution establishing a date for a public hearing regarding the PDR.

RESOLUTION 2011 # 14

RE: ESTABLISHING A DATE FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS REGARDING THE PROPOSED PURCHASE OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS IN WEST KERLEY CORNERS ROAD PROJECTS UNDER THE TOWN'S PDR PROGRAM

On a motion of Supervisor Sue Crane seconded by Councilman James Ross moved to set the public hearings for March 8, 2011 at 7:30 p.m.

Adopted	Ayes	5	Crane, Ross, Strawinski, Colgan, O'Neill
	Nays	0	

Copy Attached

TOWN OF RED HOOK AND RED HOOK FIRE COMPANY, INC. BENEFICIARY AGREEMENT

Supervisor Crane explained the Town of Red Hook and the Red Hook Fire Company are about to engage in a cooperative memo of understanding for the photovoltaic panels on the fire house. The fire company met tonight but we are not prepared to act on this now.

On a motion of Supervisor Crane seconded by Councilwoman Strawinski moved to table this discussion until the February 23rd meeting.

Adopted Ayes 5 Crane, Ross, Strawinski, Colgan, O'Neill
 Nays 0

CORRESPONDENCE

Supervisor Crane told the Board that she left a packet of information in the Board room for them to review. She also told the Board that she wanted to go into Attorney/Client session regarding contracts, but first she asked if there were any other public comments.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Rosemarie Zengen asked about grants for working together for a single highway department that work for the Villages and the Town.

Supervisor Crane explained the incentive grants and the example she used.

ATTORNEY/CLIENT SESSION

On a motion of Supervisor Crane seconded by Councilman Colgan moved to go into Attorney/Client session at 9:12 p.m. for the purpose of discussing a contract.

Adopted Ayes 5 Crane, Ross, Strawinski, Colgan, O'Neill
 Nays 0

On a motion of supervisor Crane seconded by Councilman Ross moved to adjourn the Attorney/Client session at 10:18 p.m.

Adopted Ayes 5 Crane, Ross, Strawinski, Colgan, O'Neill
 Nays 0

On a motion of Supervisor Crane seconded by Councilwoman Strawinski moved to authorize the Supervisor to contact the Town Engineer to ask for an audit of hourly expenses and discuss our decision with the Village of Red Hook before contacting the Engineer.

Adopted Ayes 5 Crane, Ross, Strawinski, Colgan, O'Neill
 Nays 0

On a motion of Councilman Colgan seconded by Councilwoman Strawinski moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:15 p.m.

Adopted Ayes 5 Crane, Ross, Strawinski, Colgan, O'Neill
 Nays 0

Respectfully submitted,

Claire W. Horst, Deputy Town Clerk